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1-8-2017 7:00 PM

Guest Recital, Decoda, January 8, 2017

Lawrence University

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Guest Recital

Decoda

Erin Lesser, flute

James Austin Smith, oboe

Carol McGonnell, clarinet

Sumner Truax, saxophone

Saeunn Thorsteinsdóttir, cello

Michael Mizrahi, piano

Sunday, January 8, 2017

7:00 p.m.

Lawrence Memorial Chapel

Piccolo Suite

Giacinto Scelsi
(1905-1988)

- I.
- II.
- III.
- IV.

Erin Lesser, flute
Carol McGonnell, clarinet

Pastorale et Arlequinade

Eugène Goossens
(1893-1962)

Erin Lesser, flute
James Austin Smith, oboe
Michael Mizrahi, piano

Mirrors

Kaija Saariaho
(b. 1952)

Erin Lesser, flute
Saeunn Thorsteinsdóttir, cello

Fantasiestücke, op. 73

Robert Schumann
(1810-1856)

- I. Zart und mit Ausdruck

James Austin Smith, oboe d'amore
Michael Mizrahi, piano

- II. Lebhaft, leicht

Saeunn Thorsteinsdóttir, cello
Michael Mizrahi, piano

- III. Rasch und mit Feuer

Carol McGonnell, clarinet
Michael Mizrahi, piano

♦ INTERMISSION ♦

5 Possibilities

Daniel Bjarnason
(b. 1979)

Carol McGonnell, clarinet
Saeunn Thorsteinsdóttir, cello
Michael Mizrahi, piano

Épitaphe de Jean Harlow

Charles Koechlin
(1867-1950)

Erin Lesser, flute
Sumner Truax, saxophone
Michael Mizrahi, piano

Garden of Follies

Andrew Norman
(b. 1979)

James Austin Smith, oboe
Michael Mizrahi, piano

Techno – Parade

Guillaume Connesson
(b. 1970)

Erin Lesser, flute
Carol McGonnell, clarinet
Michael Mizrahi, piano

PERFORMER BIOS

As a solo flutist, and chamber musician **Erin Lesser** has been described as “superb”, “excellent”, “brilliant” and “elegant”. She has travelled to prestigious venues around the world including Carnegie Hall, Walt Disney Hall, the Muziekgebouw aan 't IJ (Amsterdam) and Alice Tully Hall where she performed the American premiere of Morton Feldman's For Flute and Orchestra with the Jancek Philharmonic. She has worked with some of the most prominent classical artists today including Steve Reich, Beat Furrer, Helmut Lachenmann, Pierre Boulez, John Luther Adams, Charles Wuorinen, and David Lang, and experimental groups like Medeski Martin and Wood, and the Dirty Projectors. As a recording artist, Erin can be heard on Nonesuch, Cantaloupe, Carrier, Hat[now] Art, New Focus, Aeon, New Amsterdam, Albany and Capstone Record labels.

Erin is a founding member of the Argento Chamber Ensemble and was featured on the group's award winning recording Winter Fragments; music of Tristan Murail. Erin is also a member of Alarm Will Sound, a group that has been awarded the ASCAP Concert Music Award for “the virtuosity, passion and commitment with which they perform and champion the repertory for the 21st century” and which has been called the “future of classical music” by the New York Times. She is also a member of Wet Ink, a group that has been described as “thought-provoking and expansive and fearless in testing the limitations of what instruments or musical forms can be.” She won the 2008 National Flute Association chamber music competition with her flute and percussion duo, Due East.

A graduate of the University of Ottawa (BM) and the Manhattan School of Music (MM, DMA), Erin is proud to serve on the faculty at Lawrence University. Ms. Lesser is a Pearl Flute Performing Artist.

Hailed as “an extraordinary clarinetist” by the New York Times, “elastic, exacting, stupendous” by the LA Times and “clarinet genius” by Time Out NY, Dublin born clarinetist, **Carol McGonnell**, is known for the expressive power of her playing of standard repertoire while also enjoying acclaim for her fearless exploration of cutting-edge developments in new music. Carol is a founding member of the Argento Chamber Ensemble. She has been involved in the commissioning of over 100 new works, ranging from solo pieces to clarinet concerti.

Carol has appeared in the inaugural concert of Zankel Hall at Carnegie Hall and in Lincoln Center's Great Performers Series, has performed as

soloist in both John Adams' "In Your Ear Festival" at Carnegie and in LA's "Monday Evening Concerts", curated by Esa-Pekka Salonen and with numerous orchestras around the world and ensembles including Ensemble Modern, St. Paul's Chamber Orchestra, the Zankel Band of Carnegie Hall, Decoda and the Metropolitan Museum Artists in Concert. She has performed at the Marlboro, Mecklenburg, Santa Fe and Charlottesville Chamber Music Festivals, among many others. Carol is artistic director of Music for Museums, in association with the National Gallery of Ireland, and involving Museums such as the Isabella Stewart Gardner in Boston, J.P. Getty in LA and the Metropolitan Museum in NYC.

Carol has been broadcast on RTE, Lyric FM, BBC, WQXR and NPR and is awaiting the release of her latest CD including a new concerto by Phillipe Hurel.

Carol spent two years in residence with Trio Ariadne at Weill Hall at the Green Music Center in Sonoma and on faculty at Sonoma State University. She is an alumni of the Carnegie/ Juilliard Academy and is on faculty at the Aaron Copland School of Music of CUNY and auxiliary faculty for contrabass clarinet at the Juilliard School in NYC.

Praised as "intrepid" (Philadelphia Inquirer), "engaging" (Houston Chronicle), and "endlessly fascinating" (WQXR New York), pianist **Michael Mizrahi** has won acclaim for his compelling performances of a wide-ranging repertoire and his ability to connect with audiences of all ages.

Mr. Mizrahi has performed in the world's leading concert halls including Carnegie Hall, Toyoko's Suntory Hall, and the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC. Mr. Mizrahi won First Prize and the Audience Choice Award in the Houston Symphony Ima Hogg International Competition, as well as first prizes in the International Bartók-Kabalevsky Competition and the Iowa International Piano Competition. Mr. Mizrahi appeared for many years on the active roster of Astral Artists.

An enthusiastic promoter of music education, Mizrahi has presented lecture-recitals and master classes around the world. As a member of Carnegie Hall's prestigious Academy program and Teaching Artists Collaborative, Mr. Mizrahi spent several hours a week as a teaching artist in New York City public schools. Dedicated to the music of our time, Mr. Mizrahi has commissioned and given world premieres of several new works for piano and frequently collaborates with composers and instrumentalists in the performance of 21st-century music. He is a

founding member of NOW Ensemble, a chamber group devoted to the commissioning and performing of new music by emerging composers. Mr. Mizrahi's celebrated recording *The Bright Motion*, an album of newly commissioned works for solo piano, was recently released on the New Amsterdam Records label. His music video, also called *The Bright Motion*, was lauded by National Public Radio and New Yorker music critic Alex Ross. Michael Mizrahi received his bachelor's degree from the University of Virginia, where his concentrations were in music, religion and physics. He holds master's and doctoral degrees from the Yale School of Music, where he studied with Claude Frank.

He is currently Associate Professor of Piano at the Lawrence University Conservatory of Music in Appleton, Wisconsin.

Praised for his "virtuosic," "dazzling" and "brilliant" performances (The New York Times) and his "bold, keen sound" (The New Yorker), oboist **James Austin Smith** performs equal parts new and old music across the United States and around the world. Mr. Smith is an artist of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, the International Contemporary Ensemble (ICE), the Talea Ensemble and Cygnus as well as co-Artistic Director of Decoda, the Affiliate Ensemble of Carnegie Hall. He is a member of the faculties of the Manhattan School of Music and the State University of New York at Purchase and is co-Artistic Director of Tertulia, a chamber music series that takes place in restaurants in New York and San Francisco.

Mr. Smith's festival appearances include Marlboro, Lucerne, Chamber Music Northwest, Schleswig-Holstein, Stellenbosch, Bay Chamber Concerts, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, OK Mozart, Schwetzingen and Spoleto USA; he has performed with the St. Lawrence, Orion and Parker string quartets and recorded for the Nonesuch, Bridge, Mode and Kairos labels. His debut solo recording "Distance" was released in early 2015 on South Africa's TwoPianists Record Label.

Mr. Smith received his Master of Music degree in 2008 from the Yale School of Music and graduated in 2005 with Bachelor of Arts (Political Science) and Bachelor of Music degrees from Northwestern University. He spent a year as a Fulbright Scholar in Leipzig, Germany at the Hochschule für Musik und Theater "Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy" and is an alumnus of Ensemble ACJW, a collaboration of Carnegie Hall, The Juilliard School, the Weill Music Institute and the New York City Department of Education. Mr. Smith's principal teachers are Stephen Taylor, Christian Wetzel, Humbert Lucarelli and Ray Still.

The son of musician parents and eldest of four boys, Mr. Smith was born in New York and raised in Connecticut.

“Riveting” (NYTimes) cellist, **Sæunn Thorsteinsdóttir**, has appeared as soloist with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Toronto and Iceland Symphonies, among others, and her recital and chamber music performances have taken her across the US, Europe and Asia. Following the release of her debut recording of Britten’s Suites for Solo Cello on Centaur Records, she has performed in some of the world’s greatest halls including Carnegie Hall, Suntory Hall and Disney Hall. The press have described her as “charismatic” (NYTimes) and praised her performances for their “emotional intensity” (LATimes).

Highlights of the 2016-2017 season include the premiere of a new concerto written for Sæunn by Páll Ragnar Pálsson, co-commissioned by the NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchester and the Los Angeles Philharmonic. In addition to having collaborated closely with Daníel Bjarnason on his award-winning composition Bow to String, this season she is working with composers Halldór Smárason, Melia Watras, and Puriður Jónsdóttir on new works for solo cello.

An avid chamber musician, she has collaborated in performance with Itzhak Perlman, Mitsuko Uchida, Richard Goode and members of the Emerson, Guarneri and Cavani Quartets and has participated in numerous chamber music festivals, including Prussia Cove and Marlboro, with whom she has toured. She is cellist of the Seattle-based chamber music group, Frequency, and cellist, founding member, and co-Artistic Director of Decoda, The Affiliate Ensemble of Carnegie Hall.

Sæunn has garnered numerous top prizes in international competitions, including the Naumburg Competition and the Antonio Janigro Competition in Zagreb. She received a Bachelor of Music from the Cleveland Institute of Music, a Master of Music from The Juilliard School and a Doctorate of Musical Arts from SUNY Stony Brook.

In the fall of 2015, Sæunn joined the faculty of the University of Washington in Seattle, teaching cello and chamber music.

Hailing from Chicago, Illinois, saxophonist **Sumner Truax** has brought the music of today to audiences all over the world. An active soloist and chamber musician, Sumner has performed concerts for audiences in North America, Europe, and Africa. He plays regularly with Unmarked Turns, a piano and saxophone duo dedicated to interdisciplinary performances using art, music, and text to create unique

and exciting programs. He is also active with Dr. Ax – a drum/saxophone duo combining rock, jazz, free-improvisation, and classical music to deliver contemporary music to new audiences.

As a frequent collaborator with composers, Sumner has helped bring many new works for saxophone and saxophone quartet to life. Recently, he participated in the Global Premiere Consortium resulting in Baljinder Sekhon's Sonata of Puzzles of which he gave the Wisconsin premiere in February. He has also worked closely with award winning French composer Christian Lauba resulting in the concert etude entitled "Bebop" which is dedicated to Sumner and was premiered at the Christian Lauba conference in Houston, TX. In addition to solo repertoire, Sumner along with the Lux Quartet has commissioned and premiered several works by young composers.

A dedicated educator, Sumner has worked in a variety of educational settings. He has served as the woodwind director for the New Horizons band in Appleton, WI, program advisor at the New York Jazz Academy, and has taught privately for the Lawrence Academy of Music, and maintains a private studio teaching saxophone, flute, and clarinet students. In addition to his teaching, Sumner has programmed several educational concerts and regularly provides pre and post-concert discussions with audiences.

Sumner enjoys playing a wide variety of music and has performed and recorded with a range of classical, jazz, and rock ensembles including the Lux and East End saxophone quartets, Dr. Ax, Eastman Saxophone Project, Unmarked Turns, Love Constellation and the Stars, The Barehand Jug Band, and Fatbook.

As a winner of Wisconsin Public Radio's Neale-Silva Young Artist competition, Sumner has had the opportunity to perform live on WPR. He has also been a winner of the Lawrence Symphony Orchestra Concerto Competition, and the Downbeat student music awards.

Sumner currently teaches saxophone at Lawrence University where he serves on the performance faculty teaching applied saxophone, chamber music, and saxophone techniques. He holds degrees in performance and education from Lawrence University and the Eastman School of Music, as well as a certificate in Arts Leadership from Eastman.